

A FUTURE WORTH BUILDING¹

A SCENARIO FOR US FOREIGN POLICY 2005-2025

INTRODUCTION

Eric George Blair. In 2005, few would have thought that this un-prepossessing Congressman from Iowa would be responsible for the turnaround of the United States on the world stage. EGB – as he later came to be known – ascribed this to his good fortune. Few accepted this view. Many suggested that EGB epitomised the American Ideal (modest, self-effacing, industrious, co-operative, and prudent) and simply injected this ideal into US foreign policy. To others, EGB was everything that his predecessor wasn't.

By the time of the Presidential Election in 2008 the US was in a difficult position on the world stage. The war in Iraq had no clear prospect of abating. If anything, the security situation in Iraq had worsened. The US was isolated from its key allies. Even Great Britain, under newly appointed Prime Minister Brown, had withdrawn its troops from Iraq. Calls by NATO for troop reinforcements in Afghanistan regularly went unheeded. In November 2008, it was plain to see by all that the 'War on Terror' was not going well.

This situation was exacerbated by two legacies of the Bush era. First, there had been a reluctance to undertake measures in the US that would lessen the dependence of the American people upon imported oil from the Middle East. This had meant that Iraq continued to be part of America's vital interests. Second, the US was unwilling to work in conjunction with its key allies to solve key problems on a global basis. The unilateralism of the Bush era had managed to detach the US from its main supporters in Europe and Asia.

These matters were exacerbated by globalisation and the rise of the Chinese economy. Over the course of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the process of economic integration that we now call globalisation had continued at a rapid pace. A fair proportion of US manufacturing had migrated to Asia, creating a trade imbalance with that part of

the world. Whilst China was the main beneficiary of this trend, the US trade balance with Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea also added considerable weight to the US trade deficit.

Of course, this created trade surpluses in the Asian economies, which were balanced through the purchase of US financial instruments. In turn, the purchase of US financial instruments by the Asian central banks, along with the purchase of US financial instruments by oil producing nations, led to unduly low interest rates in the US. This situation was tenable as long as the US Dollar remained relatively stable and foreign interests continued to purchase financial instruments denominated in US Dollars. Although there was some erosion of market confidence over 2007 and 2008, the run on the US Dollar that many feared had failed to materialise before the Presidential Election.

An unfortunate consequence of low interest rates in the US was the increasing levels of personal debt taken on by US consumers. By 2008, the US had become a nation of borrowers rather than a nation of savers. This situation could remain in place as long as overseas lenders were willing to place liquidity into the US monetary system. Low interest rates had also helped to fund the US Federal Programme – a prime recipient of which was the war in Iraq. As 2008 moved closer, the great demographic shift in the US population – the ‘Age Wave’ as some called it – had started to be felt. At the point of the US Presidential election in 2008, there was severe pressure on the Federal Budgets to rebalance away from an emphasis on defence and towards the welfare commitments that had been made to the retiring Baby Boomers.

This was the background against which the 2008 Presidential Election was fought. The US was embroiled in a foreign intervention that it was losing, it was dependent upon Middle Eastern oil, it was isolated from its key allies, it was dependent upon overseas sources of funds that it spent upon consumption, its currency was weak, and it had to face the prospect of welfare commitments that it could not afford.

The Democrats nominated Hilary Clinton as their Presidential Candidate for the 2008 election. The Republicans, however, were in a bit of a bind. They had not fared well in the 2006 mid-term elections, and faced the prospect of a Democrat Congress allied to a Democrat Presidency. The old thinking that gave rise to the Bush Presidency had not

served them well, which meant that the party was in the mood for a change, a radical change. EGB was so different from the Bush mainstream that the Republican Party warmly adopted him as their Candidate.

FOREIGN POLICY

Eric Blair had hitherto been a competent Congressman from Iowa. He had expressed reservations about becoming engaged in Iraq in 2003, and found himself marginalised from the mainstream of the Republican Party. He used this relative isolation wisely. He took the trouble to consult widely on the main issues of the day, and he travelled extensively to see for himself the issues that the world faced. He visited factories in China, AIDs hospices in Africa, and distressed communities in the US. During his isolation, he met and got to know many of the leaders of the key US allies who the Bush Administration had marginalised. By the time of the US Presidential Election, Eric Blair had groomed himself to be a statesman on the world stage.

This was to become the edge that Eric Blair had over Hilary Clinton. During the Election Campaign, Hilary Clinton was portrayed as the latest offering from the Clinton dynasty, whilst Eric Blair was presented as something new and fresh. A Republican politician not associated with the Bush Administration. In the end, the victory of EGB rested on three factors. The first was the dislike of the American public of political dynasties. The second was a reluctance of the American public to vote to office a woman President. The third factor was that Eric Blair had not managed to damage his own chances of election. In many respects, the landslide victory was a vote against Hilary Clinton as much as it was a vote in favour of Eric Blair.

The headlines had hardly stopped running before EGB set to work. He realised that the period between the Presidential Election in November 2008 and his inauguration in January 2009 was a honeymoon period where, as President Elect, he could say and do things that would be harder to achieve once sworn into office.

The first honeymoon engagement stunned the world. EGB had accepted an invitation to speak before the General Assembly of the United Nations. He started the speech with an

apology to the world for the way in which his country had behaved under both the Clinton and the Bush administrations. He charged his predecessors with the abuse of power at the global level, and announced that this would change under his Presidency. He used this opportunity to announce that, from January 2009, the United States would only act in conjunction with its key allies and the world community. As a mark of his intent, from January 2009, the United States would accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, Guantanamo Bay would close – with the captives either indicted for trial or released, and would surrender for trial in The Hague those US citizens indicted for torture and crimes against humanity – irrespective of who they were.

The reaction of the world community was very supportive. The reaction of the US public to this speech was quite hostile. In order to bring around US public opinion to this way of thinking, Blair went on a charm offensive. He gave numerous newspaper and TV interviews to put his case. He also used the new media to reach a younger audience. For a while, he came to be known as the ‘Podcast President’. All the while, the case remained a simple one. In order to solve the problems that America faced, the US would have to rely upon the support of its allies. In order to win this support, the US would have to change its behaviour so that relationships were strengthened rather than weakened.

This belief took shape when EGB announced his Cabinet. He took the view that the best person for the job should be the person appointed to the job – irrespective of their party hue. This inclusive approach gave rise to what was later known as the ‘Government of National Unity’. So, for example, the Secretaries of State and Defence were both Democrats, whereas the Secretary for the Treasury was a Republican. This demonstration of inclusiveness helped to bind Congress into the programme of inclusion and helped to show the American people that the President Elect was serious about making changes.

This episode was followed by a quick tour of the Middle East in December 2008. The tour included the usual visits to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, and included a trip to Israel. Whilst in Tel Aviv, Blair confirmed his commitment to the state of Israel, but also announced that this did not amount to a blank cheque for Israel to use. He refused to elaborate on this, but went on to say that if the hand of peace were to be offered to Israel, he would expect the Israeli Government to accept it without quibbling.

There then followed an unannounced and unscheduled trip to Tehran to meet with President Ahmadinejad. It later transpired that the two had been in correspondence for some time and that the ground had been prepared well in advance. At the end of the meeting EGB announced that, when inaugurated, the US would enter into an arrangement with Iran where the US would accept Iran as a major force for stability in the Middle East, and that the US would not condone, but accept, the possession of nuclear weapons held by Iran in exactly the same way as those of Israel, India, and Pakistan are accepted. In return, the Iranian Government would recognise the state of Israel and would assist in the stabilisation of Iraq.

The furore caused by this announcement carried over from Christmas 2008, into January 2009, and up to the Inauguration Ceremony. However, it started to subside once the plan for Iraq had been published by the newly appointed, Democrat, Secretary for Defence. The plan started with an assessment that the security situation in Iraq, where the US had placed 150,000 troops, was seriously under-resourced. In order to stabilise the security situation in the country, a force level of 580,000 was needed. By 2012, under the terms of the plan, US troop levels would be reduced to 100,000, with the remaining 480,000 being supplied by America's strategic partners. Iran responded immediately with an offer of 250,000 troops to police the Eastern Shiite region of Iraq.

There then started a diplomatic process whereby Iraq would be declared a UN Protectorate and the UN would accept responsibility for the reconstruction of Iraq. The reconstruction work would be funded by the G8 group of nations, with a charge on future Iraqi oil revenues, and policed by a more general force. The US offered to contribute 100,000 troops to this force, Iran contributed 250,000 troops, China contributed 100,000 troops, Russia contributed 80,000 troops (paid for by the Japanese Government), and India contributed 35,000 troops. In all, the total force to police Iraq amounted to 565,000 – just short of the assessment of what was needed, but, as it proved, enough to do the job.

By 2011, all of the troops promised had been deployed, and the US was able to reduce the Iraq force to 100,000. The process of reconstruction, guaranteed by an international peace-keeping force, started in earnest. This proved to be something of a boost to the

world economy. The scale of destruction and devastation wrought in Iraq took the best part of a decade to replace. In construction at first, but then in manufacturing and ancillary services, there was a tremendous demand for goods and services associated with the reconstruction. By 2021, Iraq had finally entered the community of nations and had become connected to the global economy.

The spirit of co-operation engendered in the period 2008-11 retained its momentum. President Blair eventually made known what he had intended when he made his speech as President Elect in Tel Aviv. It was his expectation that the rule of law would apply in international affairs as much as it would apply in national affairs. Just as the Iranians now accepted the right of the state of Israel to exist, so he would expect the Israeli Government to find an accommodation with the Palestinian people. In consultation with the European allies and the wider international community, a plan was devised and enforced that saw the creation of a separate Palestinian State in the West Bank. In 2014, the Palestinian State was admitted as a member of the United Nations.

THE ECONOMY

In the early years of his Presidency, EGB also made strides in improving the position of the US economy. Much of this was linked to a more inclusive foreign policy. A key policy objective of the early Blair Presidency was to reduce US dependence upon Middle Eastern oil in the near term. Whilst this was, primarily, a policy to bolster the US economy, if the US could successfully lessen the dependence upon Middle Eastern oil, then there would be beneficial spin-offs in the area of foreign policy.

In April 2009, George Cornwall – the Secretary to the Treasury – announced the introduction of a Pigovian tax regime on fossil fuels, very similar to the model used in many European nations. This additional tax revenue was hypothecated to fund subsidies for clean technologies in the area of transportation. Furthermore, the taxes would also carry an escalator clause, where the percentage taxed would increase each year.

The package was not fully understood when it was first announced, but within weeks, when the retail price of gas rose to \$5 a gallon, the full impact of the measures became

immediately evident. The chosen technologies for the hypothecated funds were a combination of subsidies for bio-diesel, subsidies to the lower paid to convert their cars from fossil fuels to bio-diesel, and a subsidy for each new hybrid car sold in the US. To the surprise of many, the American public were ready for these changes and accepted them without too much fuss. By the end of the first Blair Presidency, fossil gas was retailing at \$9 a gallon and bio-diesel was retailing at \$3 a gallon. More importantly, 95% of the cars on US roads in 2012 were fuelled by bio-diesel, using a hybrid technology.

This change in the habits of the US consumer had a much wider impact. In the years to 2010, if anything, the process of globalisation had accelerated rather than declined. The process of de-industrialisation in the US, along with the other members of the G8 had accelerated as manufacturing migrated into Asia. A lessening dependence upon Middle Eastern oil helped to alleviate the US balance of trade. The reducing trade deficit, along with a 'peace dividend' from fewer troops stationed overseas, took the strain off the American financial system. Long term interest rates started to rise to more normal long-term levels and the US Dollar appreciated on the international markets.

The rise in US interest rates did not lead to the hard landing that many feared. Adept handling of the US financial system by the US Federal Reserve, coupled with rising prosperity within the global economy caused by the reconstruction of Iraq, gave rise to a soft landing for the US economy in the years 2010 – 2014. During this period, there was also a shift within the economy that had an impact on the structure of the economy out to 2025.

As the 'Baby Boomer' generation moved into retirement in the years following 2010, many had feared a softening in the price of financial instruments and in house prices as the 'Boomers' were forced to liquidate their assets to fund their retirement. This softening in asset prices did not occur. On the one hand, sales of assets never quite materialised in the volumes that were originally forecast. And on the other hand, it became 'cool' to save amongst young people – the generations following the 'Boomers'. This rediscovery of thrift by the American public resulted in a shift in the US economy away from domestic consumption, to an emphasis on export-led growth. By the time of the 2012 Presidential Election, this process had taken hold.

NO CHANGE FOR NOW

The run up to the 2012 Presidential Election was quite auspicious. The political truce between the Republican Party and the Democrat Party had worn thin, and was to come apart in 2012. The 2008 Congressional Elections had given the Republicans the Senate, and the 2010 mid-term elections had almost given the Republicans the House of Representatives. There was a feeling amongst the Democrats in 2012 that whilst President Blair had been fair with the Democrats in the ‘Government of National Unity’, he had also managed to come out on top most of the time. It was announced that, for the 2012 elections, normal politics would be restored.

This suited EGB. In the 2012 election campaign, he could present himself as being a successful world statesman – he had been able to bring home 50,000 US troops a year earlier than originally planned, the situation in Iraq had been stabilised, an accommodation had been reached with the Palestinians, and Iran was being enticed into the community of nations – and a safe pair of hands in which to entrust the US economy. The Democrats could not offer anything of a similar calibre. Blair’s choice of Victor Morales as the Vice-Presidential candidate was, when judged with hindsight, something of an inspired choice.

Whilst the margin of his victory was reduced, the second Blair Presidency still retained a substantial mandate to govern. Right from the outset, it was made known that there would be no great change of policy for the second term. The balance of politics after the 2012 elections still retained a Republican Presidency and Senate, and a Democrat House of Representatives. To the surprise of many, although normal politics had been restored, the second Blair Presidency still retained Democrat input to the Cabinet.

It was this theme of ‘no change for the moment’ that characterised the second Blair Presidency. The policies started in 2009 were by no means complete by 2013. EGB realised that, in order to see his reforms to fruition, he would have to work towards steering a continuous course for his policies. By 2013, the security situation in Iraq had started to stabilise, reconstruction work had begun, and the US economy had started to expand after the soft landing that had been caused by rising US interest rates.

Rather than sitting back to enjoy his second term, President Blair remained a hive of activity to strengthen the work already undertaken. In the field of foreign policy, the second term was characterised by a policy to strengthen the UN as an international forum that provides legitimacy in international affairs. This entailed a number of deep reforms to the organisation that made it more accountable to the member governments. Blair also revitalised the NATO structure and was instrumental in the expansion of the scope and membership of NATO to include Asian nations – the key of which were China and India – and more of a policing role throughout the world. The final key achievement of the second Blair Presidency was the expansion of the G8 group of nations to the G10 group of nations, which accepted the commercial reality of the growing strength of the Chinese and Indian economies.

The advances in foreign policy were matched by developments to the US economy. Although interest rates had been rising during the second term, export led demand from the reconstruction of Iraq had grown at a much faster pace. The net result was a gradual rebalancing of the US economy. Exports, rather than domestic consumption, were the key generator of growth. For those in work, this provided an opportunity to restructure their household balance sheets, stripping out debt and replacing it with savings. In the public sector, rising prosperity and growth gave rise to increasing tax revenues. These were spent on rebalancing the Federal Budget away from defence and towards the welfare commitments made to the Baby Boomers. This came to be known as the ‘peace dividend’.

It is not hard to see why many commentators call this the ‘Golden Age of Blair’. Peace within the world, the US respected amongst the community of nations, rising prosperity within the US, and a welfare bonanza paid out to the Baby Boomers. Nobody wanted this period to end, which was a key factor in the election of Victor Morales in 2016.

As an incumbent Vice-President of a very successful presidency, Victor Morales had a major advantage over his rivals, both within the Republican Party and against the Democratic Party. However, ‘El Jefe’, as he came to be known during the election campaign, had managed to tap into a demographic change that was reshaping American politics. The 2016 Presidential Election was the first in which the shift away from the

division of 'Blue State/ Red State' towards the divide of 'White State/ Brown State'. It was the first election in which the Latino and Hispanic vote made itself felt on a national scale.

Traditionally, the non-white vote would have been associated with the Democratic Party. The Republicans correctly identified that, on many issues, such as the support of the family and fiscal responsibility, the Latino and Hispanic populations were closer to the Republican ideals than the Democratic ideals. Pitching a candidate of Mexican antecedents demonstrated that point and served to split the Democratic vote. Many Latino and Hispanic voters opted for 'their' candidate – the Republican Victor Morales – and delivered an increased majority for a Republican Presidency. It also delivered a Republican Senate and a Republican House of Representatives in the Congressional Elections.

THE STORM CLOUDS GATHER

At first, the Morales Administration simply continued the work of the second Blair Administration. After all, it was a winning formula that was delivering a good set of results. However, the world was changing and it was these changes to which the Morales Administration had to respond. The first crisis came to a head in 2018, the second year of the Morales Presidency.

During the Blair Era, whilst remaining a member of the G8 (and later the G10), Russia had taken steps that had resulted in a greater distance between itself and its global partners. The reform of the Russian Constitution in 2008, that gave unlimited terms of office to Russian Presidents, along with the extension of the term of office from four to ten years, was seen as a move to keep President Putin in power for a very long time – almost for life. President Putin was returned on a popular mandate in the 2008 election, and was due to stand again in the Russian Presidential Elections of 2018. His heart attack and subsequent death prevented this from happening.

During his third term of office (2008-18), President Putin continued to follow the policies of relying upon fossil fuels as a source of wealth for Russia and in pursuing a narrowly focussed and nationalistic foreign policy. The Russian oil and gas reserves were often used

as tools of foreign policy, sometimes very crudely. Whilst this held great sway at the start of Putin's third term, by the end of that period, Russian energy was no longer the diplomatic force that it once had been. The US has started to move away from reliance upon fossil fuels and Europe had developed alternative supplies of energy from the Central Asian states. This was the backdrop to the 'Asian Stand-Off' of 2018-19.

In 2018, what was, essentially, a shipping accident, gave rise to a major diplomatic incident. A Russian fishing trawler collided with a Japanese freighter off the Kurile Islands. The Russian fishing trawler sank with a loss of 12 crew members, whilst the remaining 33 crew members were rescued by a Chinese submarine that just happened to be in the vicinity of the accident. The Japanese freighter suffered minor damage, and limped back to port.

The accident happened in an area of disputed territory. Whilst being nominally Russian territory, the Japanese Government had not quite relinquished its claims over that territory. Under the terms of the Sino-Japanese accord of 2015, brokered by President Blair and underwritten by the US, the Chinese Navy was entitled to pass through Japanese waters on NATO business, but was not entitled to passage through Russian waters, as Russia remained outside of the NATO framework. This caused a furore in the Russian press, who were inclined to adopt a nationalistic stance to foreign policy matters. In the context of the post-Putin power struggle in Moscow, the incident managed to grow out of all proportions.

Some sections of the Russian press saw the presence of a Chinese submarine in Russian waters as a declaration of war. China countered that the submarine was actually in Japanese waters, to which it had every right to be. Both Japan and China appealed to President Morales for his support over this issue. However, El Jefe did not want to become too associated with one side to the dispute, as it presented an opportunity to bind Russia more closely to the community of nations.

The US suggested that the matter be resolved to an international board of enquiry, comprised of two members nominated by Russia, one member nominated by Japan, one nominated by China, and one nominated by the UN. The board reported in early 2019

with the conclusions that the incident was an accident - not the deliberate act claimed by the Russian government – for which the Japanese government should compensate the Russian government and that the issue of the Kurile Islands was an anomaly that should be resolved by an international commission supervised by the UN. The commission first sat in late 2019, and, by 2025, still had not delivered even a preliminary report.

In essence, the whole issue was defused by some adept diplomacy on the part of the US government. It was seen at the time as a piece of very clever handling by President Morales, who managed to support Japan and China without alienating Russia. It was also seen as the first of many successes of the ‘Morales Doctrine’.

In echo to the doctrine of President Munro in the nineteenth century, President Morales outlined the ‘Morales Doctrine’ in a speech to the Harvard Law School in April 2020. In it, he committed the United States to the peaceful resolution of conflict in the world, acting in conjunction with all nations, using the legitimacy of the UN, and underwritten, if necessary, by the US military. It represented an extension of the policy followed by President Blair and cemented the authority of the US in global diplomacy.

It was also a piece of pure electioneering. The growing reputation of the US throughout the world, coupled with continued rising prosperity within America, gave Victor Morales his second term. The benefits of rising prosperity had not been shared equally amongst the American public, and this took the shine off the second Morales victory. El Jefe was returned as President with a diminished majority. In the Congressional elections, the Republicans retained the Senate, but lost the House of Representatives to the Democrats.

A FAIR DEAL FOR ALL

The weakening of support in the 2020 election concentrated the mind of President Morales. In the years to 2020, fuelled by the global demand caused by reconstruction throughout the Middle East and its integration into the world economy, American incomes had risen. They had risen dramatically, in some cases. However, this rising prosperity had not been shared by all. El Jefe saw that success in his second term would entail the redistribution of wealth to ensure ‘A fair deal for all’.

Happily enough, the sheer success of his foreign policy gave him the ability to introduce searching reforms into the US economy. By 2020, the security situation in the Middle East had stabilised greatly. The Palestinian Question, whilst still smarting, did not have such a violent edge as it had previously, Iraq was developing into a stable market economy, and Lebanon had largely been rebuilt to the splendour it had in the 1960s. In the light of this, it became hard to justify 100,000 US troops being stationed in the Middle East.

It had always been in the mind of Morales to expand the peace dividend to pay for a more equitable distribution of wealth in the US. A defence review undertaken early in 2021 established that it was safe for the US to reduce the number of US Citizens under arms. By 2021, the main use of the military was in peace-keeping, policing, and humanitarian aid operations. The continuing advance of globalisation made near-peer conflicts highly unlikely, and within the reformed structure of the UN, the US now habitually operated in conjunction with its NATO allies. A larger capability would be retained through the use of the National Guard, but this was, essentially, a reserve military force.

The savings from the Federal Budget caused by the peace dividend would be used on welfare rather than tax cuts. In addition to this, the growth of the American economy had led to the expansion of the tax base in the years to 2020. The 'Fair Deal', as it later came to be known, was funded by the growing tax revenues and the peace dividend. The main emphasis of the reform in public finances was in the area of health-care, which, by 2020, had come to include elder-care.

One of the main complaints heard during the Presidential Election of 2020 was that far too few Americans had adequate medical cover. With an ageing population, this had become quite a pressing issue. President Morales was equal to this challenge. In 2021, he oversaw the development and rolling out of a European-style healthcare system in the US. There were a number of vested interests that resisted these reforms, but the changes were in step with the thinking of the American public, so the resistance to change was very minor in its effect.

The boost given to the US economy caused by this expansion of the public sector was quite significant. The main beneficiaries of the reformed healthcare system were the middle class, who no longer were tied to the health-care plans provided by their employers. This resulted in a more mobile labour market. Employers no longer had to offer health-care benefits – they could offer enhanced salaries instead. Together these minor changes led to growing household disposable incomes in Middle America in the period 2021-2025.

In many respects, these incomes were saved to a greater extent than previously forecast. The American middle class became net savers in 2015 and, by 2023 the household sector total savings exceeded the household sector total debt. With a general absence of inflation, this was something of an astonishing result. The growth of household savings allowed for an expansion in corporate sector investment – mainly in the developing technologies. It also helped to re-establish New York to financial pre-eminence within the global economy. By 2025, the US was no longer a creditor nation.

AMERICA RESPLENDENT

The redevelopment of American capital in the world economy gave President Morales an opportunity to project US values to a wider audience throughout the world. By 2021, the Middle East was a long way towards becoming integrated into the world economy. India was starting to achieve some of the potential that it had shown for a number of years. South America, under the twin leadership of Brazil and Argentina, was developing as a fully functioning market economy. There only remained Africa to reap some benefit from this flowering of human endeavour.

Goaded by former President Blair, Victor Morales adopted the reform of Africa as the main foreign policy task for his second term of office. Under US guidance, a plan for the development of the continent was approved by the UN. The development plan was generously funded by the G10 group of nations, and implemented by the international community working in co-operation with local governments.

Whilst some, local customs were observed, the mass corruption that was endemic to Africa had no place within this scheme. Neither was there tolerance for the tribalism that had plagued Africa. The key objective to the UN plan was the establishment of the rule of law in Africa. To this end, NATO (which, by 2021 had come to include Nigeria and South Africa) committed troops to be used to enforce the rule of law. There was only one serious test to this scheme. An ethnic disturbance in eastern Chad was quelled by a NATO force led by France and including Pakistani and South African troops late in 2022. The episode was used by the international community to demonstrate to the African nations their willingness to fund and enforce the UN development plan.

By 2025, the economic reconstruction of Africa had started. Using the same template as developed in the Middle East, first developing the social infrastructure, and then encouraging manufacturing, and finally allowing services to develop, there was a sharp growth in prosperity in Africa. This prosperity underpinned the development of health-care facilities across the continent to deal with the AIDs epidemic. It was hoped that, by 2030, Africa could become, by and large, integrated into the world economy.

IN RETROSPECT

Looking at the Blair and Morales administrations, a number of features become evident. In the early Blair years, it appears that it was of crucial importance for the US to admit to its mistakes under the previous administration. In 2008, there was a willingness to provide assistance to America, if only it would accept the help of others. At that time, it was feared that the continuation of a unilateral policy based upon force rather than reason would be the undoing of America.

Blair's key decision was the adoption of more humility and modesty in foreign affairs. The US had many friends who were willing to help. Blair tapped into this willingness to help and established a number of truly international organisations to do so. His administration was also characterised by a generosity in the field of diplomacy. Instead of just acting to advance a narrow self-interest, he acted in a way that always ensured a better world for everyone.

Morales continued this theme. As opportunities arose to strengthen international organisations, El Jefe grasped those opportunities with relish. He realised that the US could only meet its destiny if other shared that destiny across the world. The interconnectedness caused by globalisation meant that no nation could enjoy peace and prosperity unless all nations enjoyed peace and prosperity.

This was to result in a world that, as Victor Morales stepped down as US President in 2025, was more at peace with itself than in 2005. Peace, security and prosperity were enjoyed by more of the world's citizens than ever before, to a greater degree than ever before. It is for this reason that some argue that Blair and Morales are the greatest Presidents in US history.

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¹ The content of this article was originally generated by the research within our 'America 2025' project, which is looking at US foreign policy options – at the grand strategic level – in the years to 2025. For more details, see the web site www.eufo.org.